

WHAT THE SOLDIER THINKS

A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops

Classification Canceled



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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR:

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MORALE OF OFFICERS

Junior officers' attitudes toward their superiors are related to their attitudes on morale questions

Source: Survey of company officers in several divisions in the United States.

A study of company officers reveals a close relationship between their attitude toward their superior officers and their attitude on several morale questions.

Officers who respect their superiors tend to rate high on morale scales. Officers who do not admire their superiors tend to rate low on these scales.

It is impossible, from the information at hand, to say whether it is the attitude toward superiors that creates low morale or the low morale that creates unfavorable attitudes toward superiors. It seems probable that each attitude is a cause in some cases, and an effect in others.

It is clear, however, that there is a close and intimate relationship between attitudes toward superiors and morale. The commander who feels that his junior officers have low morale can profitably evaluate his relations with these officers in the hope that by improving these relationships he can improve the officers' morale.

It is equally true that the commander who feels he has an unsatisfactory relationship with his juniors may well investigate the possibility that the relationship is impaired by external morale factors: dissatisfaction with job assignment, lack of belief in the importance of the mission, and so on.

The importance of solving the morale

HOW LINE OFFICERS VIEW THEIR SUPERIOR OFFICERS

QUESTIONS:

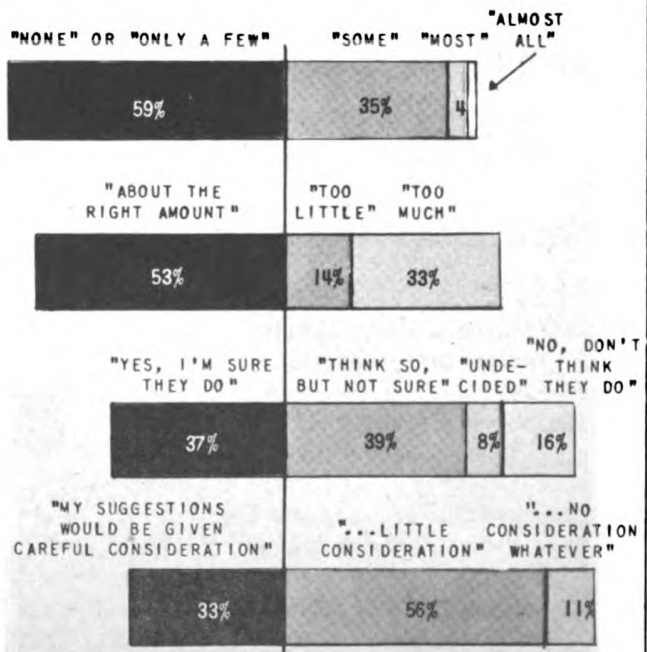
"How many of your superior officers use their rank in ways that seem unnecessary to you?"

"How much supervision in the conduct of your job do you receive from your superior officers?"

"Do you feel that your superior officers recognize your abilities and what you are able to do?"

"If you were to make suggestions (about how things in your outfit could be done better or easier) how do you think they would be received by those who could put them to use?"

PER CENT WHO SAY:

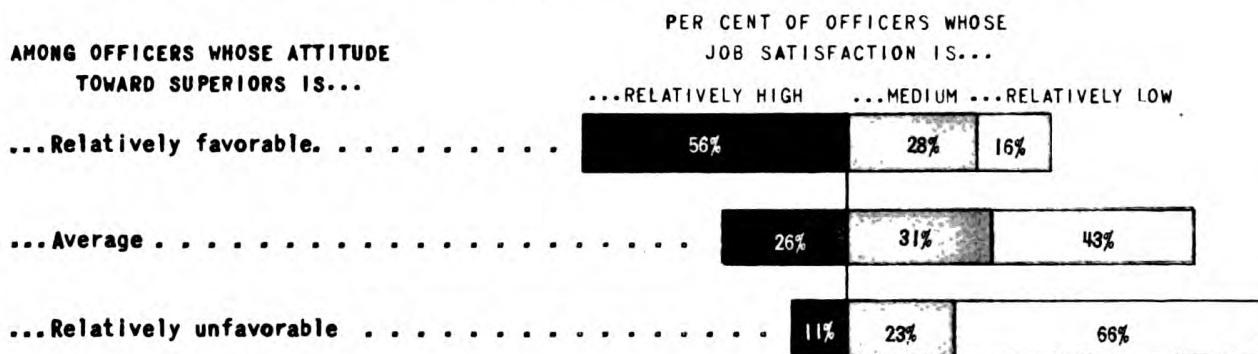


problems of junior officers is obvious. No matter how hard a young officer may try to conceal his feelings, his men will be quick to sense his low spirits and his grievances. The men are all too likely to adopt his attitudes as their own.

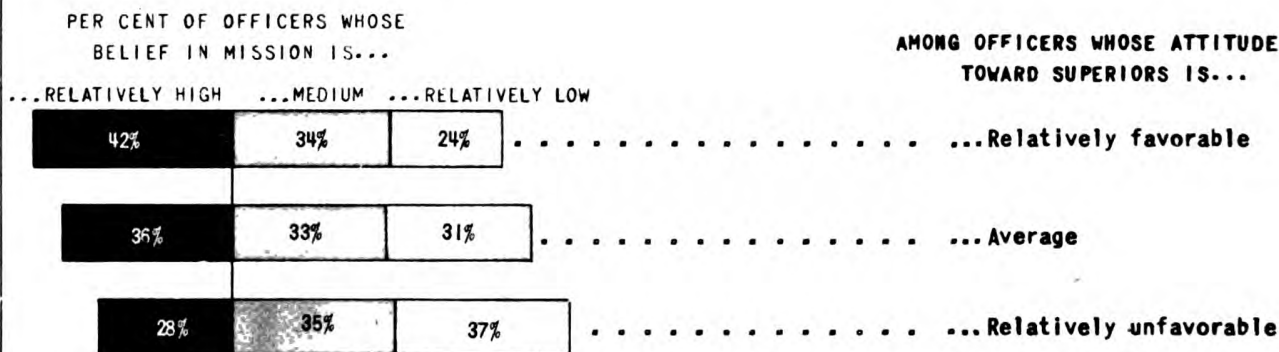
Officers with relatively favorable attitudes toward their superior officers

tend to be higher in these six attitudes related to morale: pride in outfit, job satisfaction, belief in mission, attitude toward Army efficiency, faith in the future, and personal adjustment. Officers with relatively unfavorable attitudes toward their superior officers tend to be low in these morale-related attitudes.

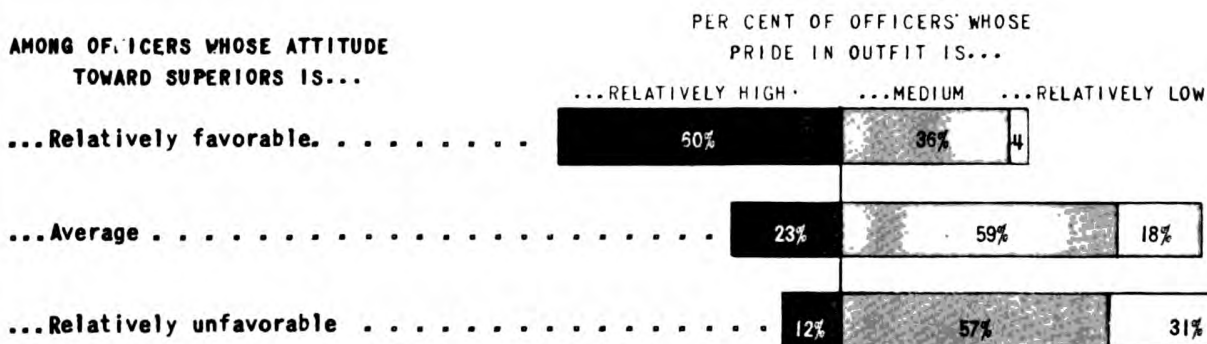
ATTITUDES TOWARD SUPERIORS AND JOB SATISFACTION



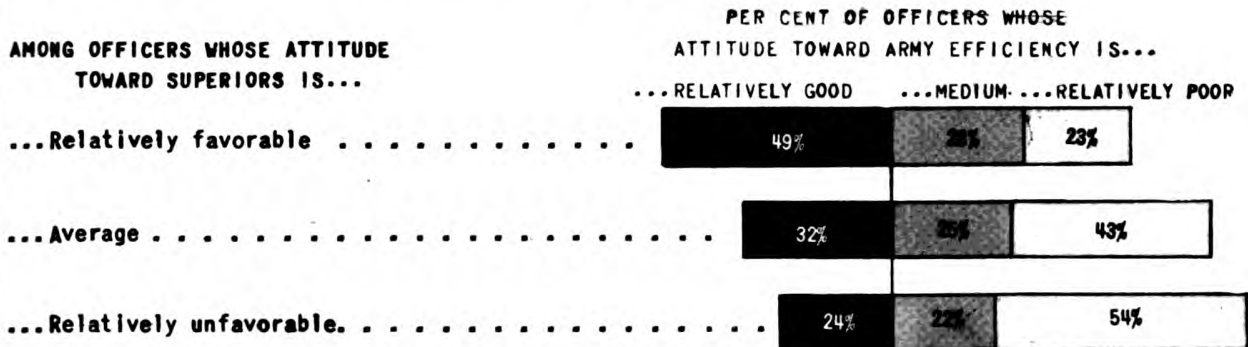
BELIEF IN THE MISSION



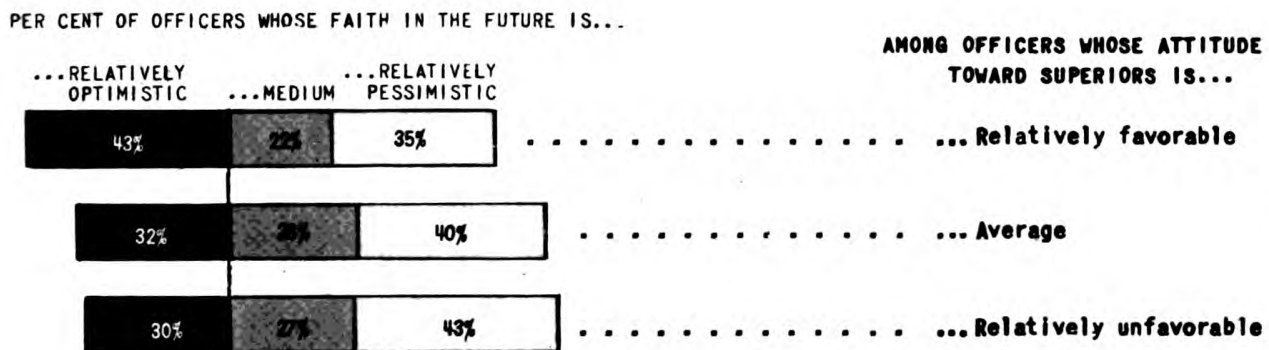
PRIDE IN OUTFIT



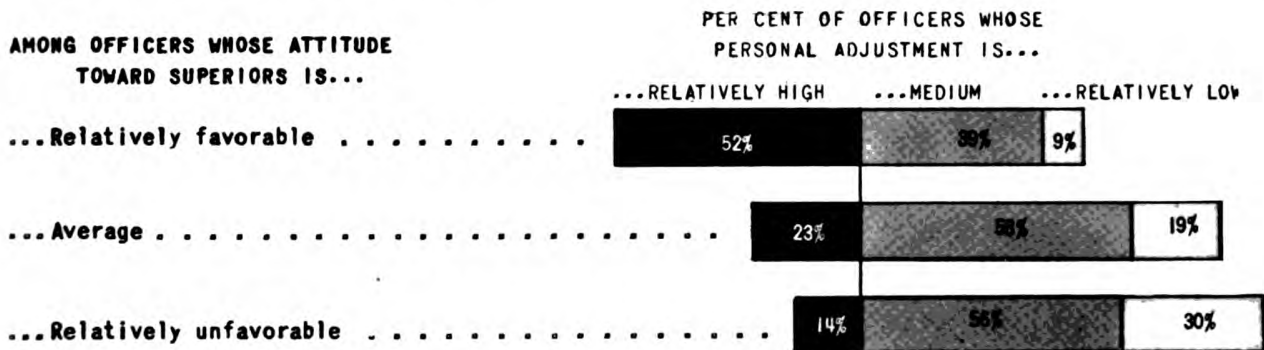
ATTITUDES TOWARD ARMY EFFICIENCY



FAITH IN THE FUTURE



PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT



135, FM 21-50 The American Army of today is a new army; under the inspiration of good leadership, it will become an effective fighting force. The immediate responsibility for this leadership, necessarily, rests on the shoulders of young officers of company grade.... Approach your duties in a humble spirit, with the firm

intention of taking every opportunity for acquiring the broad knowledge necessary to success. In your personal life, live up to the standards of an old and honorable profession. Be loyal to your superiors, firm, impartial, and human in your dealings with subordinates; diligent in duty. Be a leader in the true American tradition, by always setting the example.

WHAT AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN IRAN THINK OF THE RUSSIANS

Persian Gulf Command troops who know Russian soldiers
like them and admire their war record

Source: Study of a cross section of American enlisted men in the Persian Gulf Command.

American and Russian troops have one important point of contact--Iran, where troops of both these nations share in the job of moving supplies from the Persian Gulf wharves to Soviet territory. *To all concerned with continuing good will and confidence among the soldiers of Allied Armies, the area comprising the Persian Gulf Command is of great interest.*

As is to be expected, American soldiers are almost unanimous in their respect for the Russian soldiers' fighting ability, and the contribution of the Russians to the defeat of Germany.

In addition, most of our enlisted men in Iran say they like the Russians. *(Those who have the most contact with the Russians like them best.)*

Admiration for the Russian war effort and liking of Russian soldiers as people should not be interpreted as implying a blanket approval by the American troops

of Soviet policies. Men recognize the difficulties involved in cooperation between the countries.

GI'S RATE RUSSIANS AS "REGULAR GUYS"

To the average American, the Russian is almost an unknown quantity. Much has been written about Soviet politics and economics, *but little about the people.* Yet it is obviously important, from a military point of view, that our men and the Russian soldiers be able to work and fight together with a minimum of friction and a maximum of mutual confidence. In this connection, it is noteworthy that the Army motion picture, "*Battle of Russia*," stressed the life and characteristics of ordinary Russians.

The study in the Persian Gulf Command produces evidence that can profitably be passed on to our men during orientation programs. Our enlisted men who have known Russians personally in the Persian Gulf are more likely to say they *like* the Russians than are the men who have not known Russians.

MOST AMERICANS IN IRAN LIKE THE RUSSIANS

QUESTION: "How do you like the Russians?"

PER CENT SAYING...

AMONG MEN WHO:

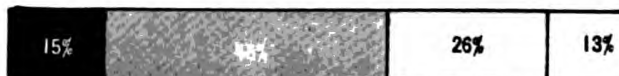
Have had contact with Russians and know Russians personally.



Have had contact with Russians but have not known Russians personally. . . .



Have not had contact with Russians.



DO THEY RESPECT THE RUSSIANS AS FIGHTERS

In answer to the question: "How would you rate the Russians as fighters?" enlisted men are almost unanimous in saying that the Russians are "very good" or "good" fighters. Three out of four rate the Russians "very good fighters." One in five rates them "good fighters." Practically no one rates them "poor fighters."

The same feeling of admiration prevails in the average GI's attitude toward Russia's war efforts generally and her ability to "keep punching" when the going gets tough.

Ninety-five per cent agree with the statement: "The Russians are doing as good a job as possible of fighting the war, considering everything," and only five per cent disagree. Ninety-three per cent agree with the statement, "The Russians can take it on the chin and come back for more," and only 1 per cent disagrees.

THEY ADMIRE THE RUSSIAN WAR EFFORT AND APPRECIATE ITS IMPORTANCE

GI's in Iran are practically unanimous in naming either the U.S. or Russia as the country contributing most toward winning the war. Roughly, three out of four pick the U.S., one out of four the Russians. When asked to pick "the country that is doing second best" the overwhelming majority again choose Russia and the U.S., simply naming for second place whichever one they had not picked or first place.

Russia also runs "one, two" with the U.S. on the question of which country's soldiers work the hardest. Asked "Who works the hardest?" six out of ten enlisted men name American soldiers; three out of ten name Russian soldiers. Practically all who think American soldiers work hardest say Russian soldiers work second hardest and vice versa.

The Russian people are regarded by a large majority of enlisted men as taking the war "most seriously" among our Allies. Almost three out of four name the Russians in answer to the question "Who do you think is taking the war most

seriously?" Only one in thirty says the Russian people are taking the war least seriously.

Respect for the Russian people is more pronounced among better educated GI's than among those with less education. Eighty-four per cent of those who are high school graduates or college men think the Russian people are taking the war "most seriously," as compared with 63 per cent of the grade school men and high school non-graduates.

THEY WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RUSSIANS

The men's desire for information about Russia and the Russian people is unsatisfied in many instances. Two-thirds of them say they have had no talks overseas by their officers about "The Russian people, their customs, and how they are carrying on the war." The same percentage express a desire to hear such talks.

QUESTION: "Since leaving the United States have you heard any talks by your officers about the Russian people, their customs, and how they are carrying on the war?"

PERCENTAGE SAYING...

...yes, several times



...yes, once or twice



...no, none



QUESTION: "Would you like to hear more talks of this kind?"

PERCENTAGE SAYING...

...yes, very much



...yes, somewhat



...don't know



...no



DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR MEN THINK?

Officers have a tendency to overestimate the proportion of enlisted men who have favorable attitudes on questions related to morale

Source: Study of company officers and enlisted men in three Infantry divisions.

The good officer knows his outfit. He knows how it can shoot, how it can march, how it can carry out its technical jobs. *It is a far more difficult thing for the officer to know what his men think and feel about the Army, their jobs, the war and other problems related to morale.*

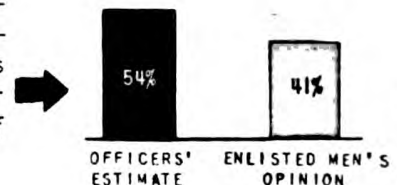
A recent Army study shows that there is a general tendency for officers to wear rose-colored glasses in considering

some of these morale-related attitude of their own men.

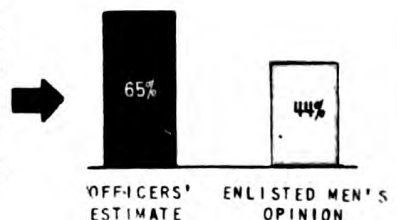
Company officers in the division studied were asked how many of their men held certain attitudes. The actual attitudes of the men in their command were determined by direct, anonymous questioning. It is not possible to compare the results company by company, to determine exactly how many officers estimated the attitudes of their men correctly. We can, however, compare the *average estimate* of all officers with the replies of all men. Here are the results

OFFICERS' ESTIMATES AND MEN'S OPINIONS

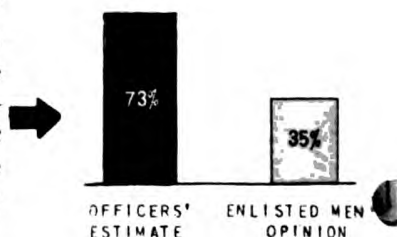
1. JOB SATISFACTION. All but 3 per cent of the officers have opinions on how many of their men are satisfied with their present Army jobs. Among officers with opinions, the average estimate is that *54 per cent* of their men are satisfied. Only 41 per cent of the men report that they are satisfied.



2. SOLDIER OR WAR WORKER. Among the 88 per cent of the officers who have opinions about whether their men feel they can do more for their country as soldiers than as war workers, the average estimate is that *65 per cent* of their men feel they can do more as soldiers. Actually, only 44 per cent of the enlisted men say they can do more as soldiers.



3. OPTIMISM ABOUT POST-WAR U.S. Only two-thirds of the officers have an opinion on how many of their men think the U.S. will be a better place in which to live after the war than it was before the war. Among officers with opinions, the average estimate is that *73 per cent* of their men think the United States will be a better place. Only 35 per cent of the men say they think the United States will be a better place.



THE EDUCATED SOLDIER

High educational level presents both opportunities and problems to command

Source- Cross section surveys of enlisted men in the United States and data from AGO Machine Records Branch.

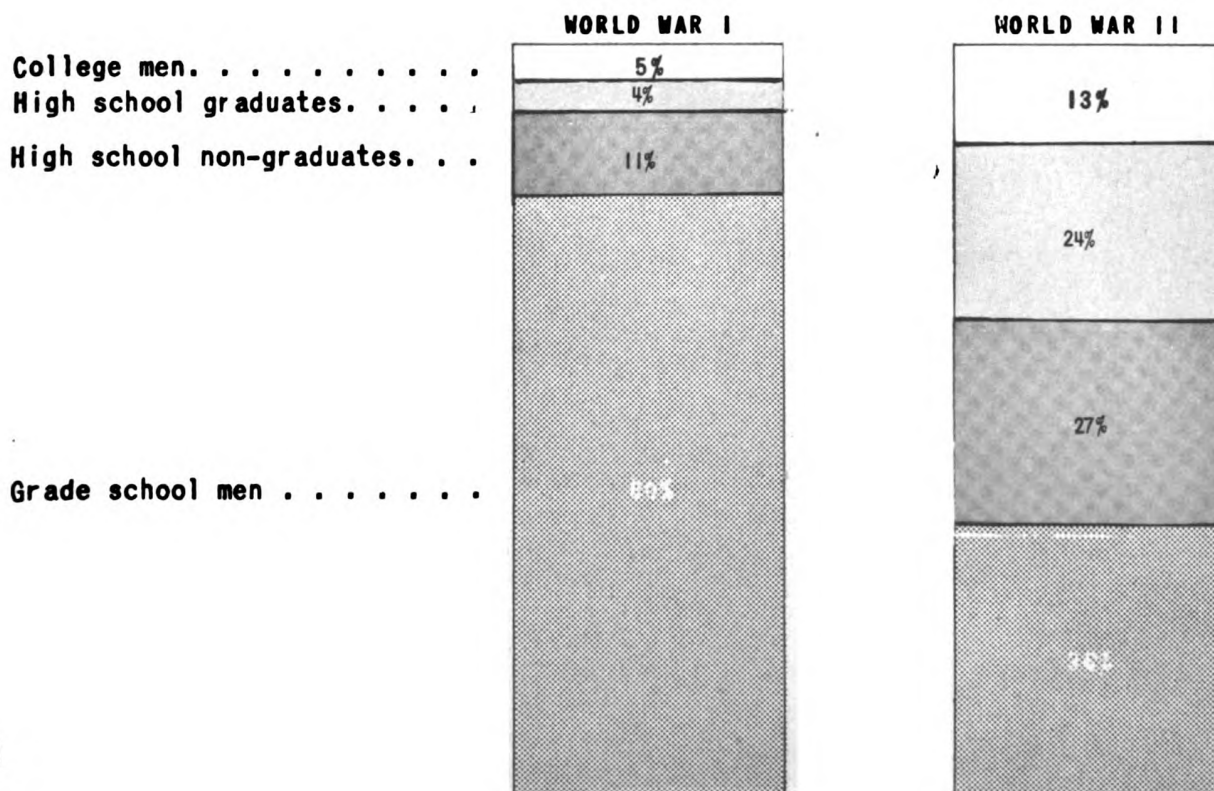
Company commanders are often puzzled by the apparently contradictory attitudes of their well educated soldiers. These men have personality assets--and they have personality liabilities. They have certain viewpoints and abilities which speed their adjustment and training in the Army, and they have certain mental barriers to such adjustment and training.

This article offers no blue print for

the handling of educated enlisted men. It is written in the belief that a clear statement of the facts will aid each commander in the solution of the day-to-day problems which he faces in exploiting the assets and minimizing the liabilities of his well educated men.

The problem of the educated soldier is one of major proportions. America's school population has grown phenomenally since the end of the first World War. The effect of this progress upon the personnel of the Army is great. No Army in world history has been as well educated as the American Army of today.

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND OF SELECTEES IN TWO WARS



In its large group of well schooled enlisted men the Army has acquired an invaluable human resource, capable of absorbing training and of serving well at jobs calling for intelligence and initiative.

The morale picture is not so clear-cut. The commander will often be pleased and often disturbed by the attitudes and points of view which his educated enlisted men hold. Below, in summary form, are some of the differences between the well schooled and the less schooled men.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES VERSUS LESS EDUCATED ENLISTED MEN

High school graduates and college men are more likely than are less educated men to...

- ...Believe they can serve their country better as soldiers than as war workers.
- ...Want service with a combat outfit overseas.
- ...Refrain from going AWOL.
- ...Believe the job ahead is a tough one.
- ...Have high self-confidence.
- ...Have a high degree of personal adjustment.
- ...Be well informed on current war events.
- ...Have a great interest in keeping up with the news.
- ...Be less confused and more internationalistic in their ideas about the post-war world.

In some respects, attitudes of better educated men may create problems. Well educated men are more likely than less educated men to...

- ...Be most critical of Army rules and practices.
- ...Be most critical of the nation's war effort to date.
- ...Be most cynical about Army news.
- ...Have the least vindictiveness toward the enemy peoples.

The commander of well educated soldiers is, in a very real sense, "on the spot." As a group, his men are ready and willing to face the realities of the job of war, and are ready to fight. On the other hand, they are peculiarly prone to be critical of their officers. Their civilian experience has brought them into contact with other men of ability, other men who carried heavy responsibility and other men who used authority. They are quick to notice shortcomings, quick to doubt.

To say that educated men are more critical does not imply that they are more likely to be insubordinate. What evidence there is on the subject of discipline--notably AWOL rates--shows that the better educated soldier is far less likely than the poorly educated man to be a disciplinary offender.

The good commander knows that he should always try to make clear to his men the reasons why the Army does the things it does the way it does.

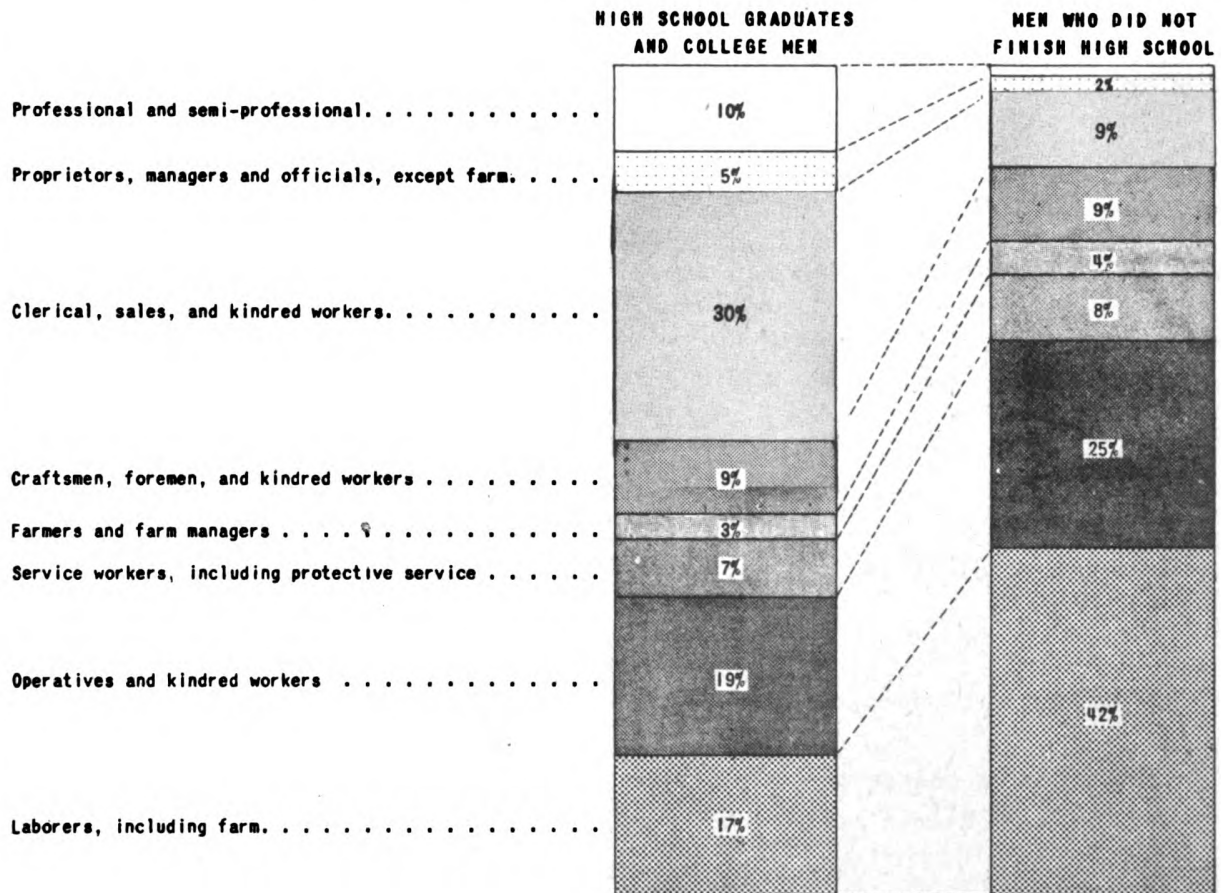
EDUCATION AND ASSIGNMENT

The job placement of well educated soldiers in the Army is a difficult problem. Men with greater education are far more likely than the less educated to come from white collar fields--professional, technical, clerical, and sales. These have their counterparts in the Army, but needs for such personnel are definitely limited, as compared to the greater need for mechanical skills.

Obviously, a good commander makes every effort to assign educated men to jobs which make use of their special talents and training. He may not, however, have available assignments for all these men. When military necessity requires their assignment to non-specialized jobs, the commander should explain these necessities and the reasons for the assignment actually made. Men who would resent what seemed arbitrary mis-assignment can often be made to understand that the general welfare sometimes demands service in assignments unrelated to previous experience or education.

**OCCUPATIONS OF SINGLE U.S. MALES (NOT HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS)
18-34 YEARS OF AGE BY EDUCATION**

(Men without experience or not reporting occupation excluded)



Source: U.S. Census, 1940

PROMOTIONS

The educated soldier is often a man with civilian leadership experience or ambitions for leadership. He carries this desire for advancement into the Army.

The well educated soldier is more likely than lesser educated to win promotions. A cross section of white enlisted men in the United States, August 1943 showed that 38 per cent of the men who were either high school graduates or college men were noncoms, while only 27 per cent of the men who had not finished high school were noncoms.

In spite of this record, well educated soldiers are less likely to express great optimism about their promotion chances than are the lesser educated. In interpreting this fact, note in the chart on the following page that men were asked to give an over-all estimate of promotion chances, and not their chances of attaining a specific grade. It may be that a college man's lack of great optimism results from his belief that he will never make staff sergeant while a man who didn't finish grade school may be optimistic because he expects to get his corporal's stripes.

EDUCATED MEN TEND TO BE PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PROMOTIONS

QUESTION: "Do you think a soldier with ability has a good chance for promotion in the Army?"

PERCENTAGE SAYING...

HIGH SCHOOL
GRADUATES OR MORE

LESS THAN
HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES

...A very good chance.

34%

44%

...A fairly good chance.

46%

35%

...Not much of a chance or
no chance at all.

16%

15%

...Undecided

4%

4%

ATTITUDES OF LONG-SERVICE PRIVATES

Men who have served long months in the ranks without winning promotions are likely to rate low in many morale attitudes. Dissatisfaction with what they feel to be their "failure" is probably one cause of this, but the fact that the men with the worst attitudes are not likely to be promoted is probably also a factor in the lower level of morale found among long-service privates.

On many morale factors, differences by length of service are greater among

well educated soldiers than among the less educated.

Attitudes toward officers, toward the soldier role, toward noncoms and toward the Army's concern for the soldier's welfare tend to be less favorable among long-service privates than among privates with less than six months' service.

This tendency does not hold for all morale attitudes. Short-service privates are just as likely as long-service privates to be critical of Army efficiency and to express dissatisfaction with their jobs.

ARE YOU WELL INFORMED?

An information quiz to test officers' knowledge of military men and events

Source: A study of a cross section of company grade line officers in three Infantry divisions.

It is taken for granted that Army officers should be very well informed on questions relating to the war. Certainly, they should know the identity of top-ranking military leaders. They should be well acquainted with the names of foreign places and people in the war headlines. Such information is an index of their degree of interest in and awareness of the war as well as of their ability to digest and retain facts about the war.

In December 1943, the following two-part information quiz was administered to a cross section of company grade officers in three Infantry divisions. Ratings have been determined on the basis of the scores obtained by these officers. The reader can test himself by matching his own score against the ratings. Obviously, no officer should be content to score lower than "excellent" on either part of the quiz.

Correct answers will be found inverted in the boxes at the bottom of the following page.

PART I -- GIVE THE NAMES OF THESE MILITARY LEADERS:

- a. Commander in Chief, United States Army. _____
- b. Chief of Staff, United States Army. _____
- c. Commanding General of American Army Air Forces. _____
- d. Commanding General of American Army Ground Forces. _____
- e. Commanding General of American Army Service Forces. _____
- f. Commander of United Nations Forces in the South-west Pacific. _____
- g. Commander of United Nations Forces in the North African Theater of Operations§. _____
- h. Commanding General of the American Fifth Army _____
- i. Commanding General of the American Seventh Army _____

RATINGS: 5 correct answers.....excellent
 8 correct answers.....good
 6-7 correct answers.....fair
 0-5 correct answers.....poor

Record your own score here _____

§In answering this question, consider the date to be December 1943.

ARE YOU WELL INFORMED?

PART I -- GIVE THE NAMES OF THESE PLACES AND PEOPLE OF CURRENT OR RECENT IMPORTANCE IN THE NEWS:

- South American country maintaining friendly relations with the Axis §.
- The first major beach head established by the American Fifth Army in its invasion of Italy
- River which marked the main Russo-German battle line in September 1943
- Major Japanese stronghold in the Aleutians evacuated by its garrison just before invasion by American forces
- Nazi-occupied country in which the Germans are meeting stiff organized resistance by guerilla forces under General Tito
- European oil fields vital to the Nazi war machine bombed by American planes.
- City in which Roosevelt, Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek met
- The leader of the French Committee of National Liberation

RATINGS: 7-8 correct answers.....excellent
5-6 correct answers.....good
3-4 correct answers.....fair
0-2 correct answers.....poor

Record your own score here _____

HOW OFFICERS SCORED

The cross section of Infantry officers who took the information tests presented above, attained the following scores:

PART I -- 9 correct answers..... 27%
8 correct answers..... 22%
7 correct answers..... 18%
6 correct answers..... 11%
0-5 correct answers..... 22%

PART II -- 8 correct answers..... 8%
7 correct answers..... 17%
6 correct answers..... 13%
5 correct answers..... 14%
4 correct answers..... 13%
3 correct answers..... 13%
0-2 correct answers..... 22%

17 correct answers (both parts)..... 4%

ANSWERS TO PART I

a.	Roosevelt	f.	MacArthur
b.	Marshall	g.	Eisenhower
c.	Arnold	h.	Clark
d.	McNair	i.	Patton
e.	Somervell		

ANSWERS TO PART II

a.	Argentina	e.	Yugoslavia
b.	Salerno	f.	Ploesti
c.	Dnieper	g.	Cairo
d.	Kiska	h.	DeGaulle

§In answering this question, consider the date to be December 1943.

WHAT OFFICERS THINK OF THEIR OWN TRAINING

Company officers say they need more training as leaders and instructors

Source: Study of a cross section of line captains and lieutenants in three Infantry divisions in the United States.

Company grade officers studied show a healthy desire to learn more about their work. They frankly admit that they themselves need more training in the art of

training and leading enlisted men.

Topics on which most officers want more training include the art of technical and tactical instruction, the methods of building proper mental attitudes, and ways of helping solve their enlisted men's problems.

OFFICERS SAY THEY NEED MORE TRAINING



SEVEN OUT OF EVERY TEN OFFICERS SAY THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE TRAINING IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS:

- "How to train men in the use of their equipment and weapons."
- "How to train men in individual defense measures and self-protection tactics."
- "What to do about dissatisfaction with job assignments among enlisted men."
- "How to handle personal problems affecting the welfare of the individual soldier."
- "How to develop and maintain among the men a belief in the importance of the things we are fighting for."
- "How to develop a feeling of pride in outfit among soldiers."



FIVE OUT OF EVERY TEN OFFICERS SAY THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE TRAINING IN THE FOLLOWING:

- "How to show men the importance of the outfit's job to the success of combat operations."
- "How to put on an effective program of physical conditioning for troops."



THREE OUT OF EVERY TEN OFFICERS SAY THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE TRAINING IN:

- "How to teach military courtesy."



TWO OUT OF EVERY TEN OFFICERS SAY THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE TRAINING IN:

- "How to teach close order drill."

These company officers also feel that officers in their own outfits are not giving sufficient emphasis to certain aspects of training. For example:

70% think most officers give too little attention to developing pride in outfit.

68% think not enough is being done to develop and maintain among the men a belief in the importance of what we are fighting for.

64% think there should be more emphasis on arranging for reassignments and doing other things to reduce job dissatisfaction among the men.

59% think that more emphasis is needed on taking a personal interest in the welfare of the men.

53% think not enough emphasis is given to training the men in the use of equipment and weapons.

51% think not enough emphasis is given to showing enlisted men the importance of their outfit's job to the success of combat operations.

Half or more of the officers feel that each of the following topics receives enough emphasis from officers in their outfits:

Individual defense measures and self-protection tactics.

Physical training and conditioning.

Close order drill.

Military courtesy.

COMMENTS OF OFFICERS

In connection with questions on training, a large number of the officers wrote their own comments on the anonymous questionnaire. The following are typical of these comments:

PERSONAL INTEREST IN THE MEN

"Too many officers think of themselves first--It should be just the opposite."

"Too much 'red tape' and 'whitewash' takes up valuable time of junior officers which should be devoted to this purpose."

"We don't have enough time for the men."

FAITH IN CAUSE

"There should be a great deal more work done in telling the American soldier what we are fighting for. I do not believe the morale of our troops is as it could and should be. That's because Americans do not have a 'sense of mission' about this war."

JOB DISSATISFACTION

"All officers should be trained to properly assign EM where they are best fitted."

"The Army has a pretty good system of classifying men but never seems to make much use of it."

EQUIPMENT AND WEAPONS

"Should be more firing of live ammunition to give confidence in the weapons."

"We have stressed their individual weapons and crew-served weapons but they have little knowledge of other weapons of the Army."

"Men taught just weapon they are armed with. Rifleman doesn't know MG whereas some time he might need to know it."

OFFICER ASSIGNMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Many company grade officers are dissatisfied with promotion policy

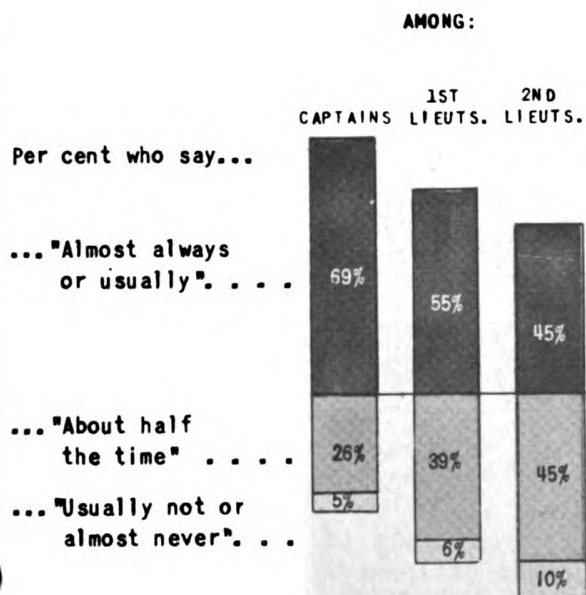
Source: Study of a cross section of line officers of company grade in three Infantry divisions in continental United States.

High morale among company officers is a key to the problem of morale among enlisted men. Unless these officers, the direct and personal leaders of the men, are satisfied with their own job assignments and convinced of the fairness of promotions, they are likely to fail to build such satisfaction and conviction among their men.

It is unfortunately true that many officers are dissatisfied with promotion policies and prospects within their outfits.

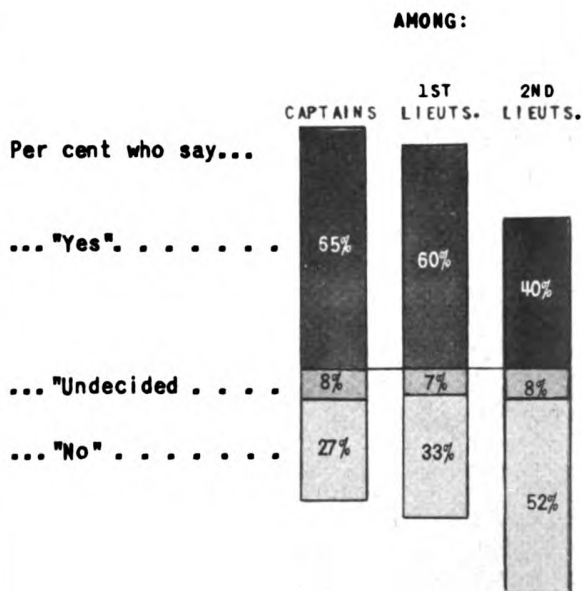
SATISFACTION WITH PROMOTION POLICY

QUESTION: "From what you have seen, do you think promotions usually go to the officers who deserve them most?"



SATISFACTION WITH PROMOTION PROSPECTS

QUESTION: "Do you think your present Army assignment gives you a fair chance of promotion?"



Only about half of the line officers of company grade in three Infantry divisions in this country express satisfaction with the promotion policy, while others are dissatisfied or have doubts. As the chart on the left shows, the satisfaction is higher among first lieutenants than among second lieutenants, and higher among captains than among first lieutenants.

Among officers of the first three grades, second lieutenants are considerably less inclined to think their present Army assignments give them a fair chance of promotion than are first lieutenants or captains.

One of the factors related to satisfaction with promotion policy is the preference of many of these line officers for staff, rather than line, assignments. *Only 55 per cent of the line officers express a preference for line over staff assignments, while 32 per cent would rather be staff officers, and 13 per cent are undecided.*

Preference for staff assignments is expressed by a high proportion of married men over 25 years of age.

The line officers who prefer staff assignments are more likely to be critical of the promotion policy than are those who prefer to remain in line assignments.

LINE OFFICERS PREFERRING STAFF ASSIGNMENTS ARE MORE DISSATISFIED WITH PROMOTION POLICY

QUESTION: "From what you have seen, do you think promotions actually go to the officers who deserve them most?"

Per cent answering "Almost Always" or "Usually"
(Each man represents 5%)

Among Captains . . .

...preferring line assignments . . .



...preferring staff assignments
or undecided.



Among 1st Lieutenants . . .

...preferring line assignments . . .



...preferring staff assignments
or undecided.



Among 2nd Lieutenants. . .

...preferring line assignments. . .



...preferring staff assignments
or undecided.



In so far as it may be necessary to keep junior officers in line assignments in spite of their desire for staff work, this study suggests two actions which might be important for officer morale and efficiency:

1. Make sure that the promotion policy is fair and that officers know it is fair.

2. Make a greater effort to convince younger officers of the desirability and importance of their present assignments and of their fitness for them.

FROM A LETTER OF THE COM-
MANDING GENERAL, REPLACE-
MENT AND SCHOOL COMMAND,
ARMY GROUND FORCES

HEADQUARTERS
REPLACEMENT AND SCHOOL COMMAND
ARMY GROUND FORCES

Birmingham 3, Alabama,
22 January 1944.

Subject: Leadership and Mental Conditioning of Troops.

Reference is made to Volume I, Number One, of "What the Soldier Thinks: A Monthly Digest of War Department Studies on the Attitudes of American Troops." It is understood that distribution has been made to all schools and replacement training centers....

...The reference document, in my opinion, provides the most practical, common-sense exposition on the subject of morale building that has yet been produced. The analysis it contains does much to take the subject out of the realm of the intangible and approaches a real guide or subject schedule for the morale-building phase of our training job. Regardless of opinion as to the accuracy of the figures presented, or the value of surveys in general, I am sure that your own experience will lead you to accept as fact the general results shown.

I am anxious that every officer in the command, especially the youngsters and officer candidates, be "inoculated" with the lesson contained in this booklet for the purpose of: first, stressing the responsibility of the leader in the development of proper "attitudes" in his men; and, second, pointing out definite procedures to accomplish that part of his job....

...I would like to have this matter presented as a lecture and conference to all officers and officer candidates. I consider it too important to be left to separate regiments or battalions. To insure the comprehensive and impressive presentation it deserves, such a talk should be delivered, after adequate study and preparation, with the use of suitably enlarged charts, either by you or by the best qualified senior officer of your command.

My thought is that the pages of the text indicated above (pp. 1-9 Dec. Issue -- Ed.) contain adequate material for the real old-fashioned exhortation on the responsibility of leadership and specific instructions in its art. Its presentation should have the most careful consideration and the best possible effort....

/s/ HARRY F. HAZLETT
/t/ HARRY F. HAZLETT
Major General, U. S. Army
Commanding

HOW THE STUDIES ARE MADE

The articles in this bulletin are based on attitude surveys conducted by the Research Branch, Morale Services Division and the research units reporting to the commanding generals of the several theaters.

The staff of the Research Branch is composed of Army officers who are experienced in the field of surveys, together with a number of civilian specialists. Techniques have been developed, tested and adjusted to fit the Army's problems.

The basic steps in conducting a study are as follows:

1. The questionnaire is prepared in consultation with the War Department branches, or the theater command immediately concerned. Questions are carefully chosen to provide the exact type of information desired.
2. The questionnaire is pre-tested. That is, the questions are tried out on small groups of men to determine whether they are meaningful and understandable to the type of men or officers to be studied.
3. The project is cleared for action with the commands in which the study is to be made.
4. The number of men to be surveyed is set sufficiently large to insure statistically reliable findings.
5. The men to be surveyed are selected to insure as true a cross section of the group to be studied as possible. A cross section of enlisted men in the United States, for example, is so drawn as to give proper proportionate representation to each branch of the Army, to men in each stage of training, and to men stationed in the various sections of the country. It is, of course, possible to get cross sections of a single branch, of a division, of Negro troops, or any other portion of the Army desired.
6. The men complete questionnaires under conditions of absolute anonymity. They are assembled in small groups, and hear a short introduction given by a specially trained class leader. This introduction makes it clear to the men that only their frank opinion is wanted, and that they are not being tested or spied on. If the group is composed of enlisted men, the class leader is an enlisted man, and no officers are present during the session. No names or serial numbers are placed on the questionnaires. Ordinarily, illiterates or men of very low intelligence are interviewed by specially trained enlisted men.
7. The data are analyzed by specialists in attitude research analysis. Reports of these analysts are released to agencies concerned, and also form the basis for the material presented in this bulletin.

The procedure outlined above is that followed in the typical cross section survey. Other techniques, of course, are employed from time to time in special situations.